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**A LITTLE JOURNEY  
TO  
SAN MATEO  
COUNTY**

**BY ELBERT HUBBARD**











A BANANA PALM AT MENLO PARK

A LITTLE JOURNEY TO  
**SAN MATEO  
COUNTY**

BY ELBERT HUBBARD



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# A Little Journey to San Mateo County



HERE are five reasons for human migration.

The first is the need of food.

Second, religious and political liberty ☸ ☸

Third, the search for the springs of perpetual youth.

Fourth, just plain love of adventure and a desire for novelty and change.

Fifth, the search for gold.

The Persians, who overran Greece, were actuated in their migrations by hunger.

The Huguenots and the Pilgrim Fathers were in search of religious liberty.

Ponce de Leon was in search of the fountain of perpetual youth.

Marco Polo, Columbus and Balboa were navigators, explorers and gentlemen adventurers by nature. ¶ The Argonauts sought for gold.

**R**ECENTLY I made a little journey to the place where the five objects of migration abound—if anywhere. And the discovery supplied me more joyous thrills to the acre than anything that has come my way for many a moon.

San Mateo County, California, is the place! Different in situation, unique, peculiar—the locality where mountain, sky, sea, bay, lakes and meadows blend into a topological symphony. We have heard of the Utopia that lacked only two things, water and society—but here these two things abound—also other things, plus.

In San Mateo County I found in abundance everything that human beings crave and require.

In San Mateo County there is liberty—religious, social, political. Food is plentiful, and the high cost of living has no terrors.

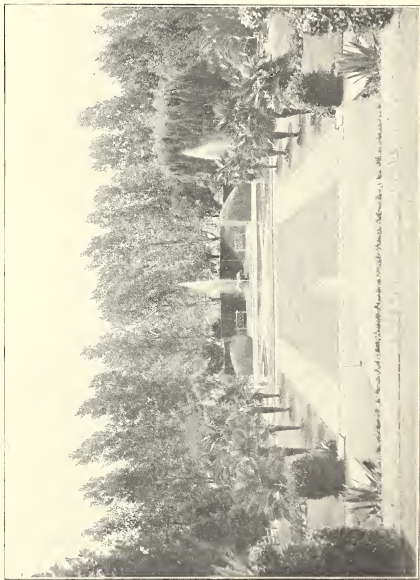
In San Mateo County repair equals waste—if anywhere in the wide world. Happiness abounds, because the conditions are right.

Also, if one wants adventure, here it is. Also, here is gold galore if you work for it—and I am told that that is the only way to get it.

We appreciate things by contrast. ¶ San Mateo County is practically a suburb of San Francisco. I discovered this modern Arcadia in a Packard,



REDWOODS—NEAR PESCADERO



GARDEN—HENRY P. BOWIE, HILLSBOROUGH



roughing it deluxe, as we traversed a roadway, mudless, dustless, skidless. This roadway ran eagerly under our automobile without bump, jump or jounce. ¶ The sunshine was glorious, the breeze from the ocean fanned our cheeks.

On one side lay San Francisco Bay, on the other was the Pacific Ocean.

In less than an hour's ride from the Saint Francis Hotel we saw wild deer. Jack-rabbits and cottontails crossed the road, indifferent to "Safety First." Bevvies of California quail, with their gorgeous topknots, scorned our approach.

In the rushing, dancing mountain-streams we met fishermen who had more than the proverbial fisherman's luck, which was "nothing to the size of those that got away."

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**S**AN MATEO COUNTY is a place where the modern Franciscan Friars frolic.

We left San Francisco at four o'clock in the afternoon in a fog that had blown in from the ocean, dense and permeating.

In twenty minutes' time we had run out of the fog, and the glorious sunshine bathed the landscape. Not a cloud was in the sky. ¶ We passed through the pretty and prosperous places of Daly City,

Colma, South San Francisco, San Bruno, Lomita Park, Millbrae, Easton, Burlingame, Hillsborough, San Mateo, Belmont, San Carlos and Redwood City—the county seat, a town with a fine look of stability, Menlo Park. To the west are Woodside and Portola, places where yet lingers the look of pioneer days, localities where Nature is especially lavish in her gifts.

Just here let me explain a great natural phenomenon, which is the secret of the wonderful growth of fruits and flowers found in California. It is a matter of sunshine and water. That is, love and labor collaborating set science to work and apply water to land, and the result is that the earth laughs a harvest.

In the Tropics the air is close, muggy, depressing, enervating. But in San Mateo County miasma is unknown, the hookworm is never in evidence, and all the stimulation you need is in the atmosphere. Here is perpetual Summer, and yet each day has its seasons. In the middle of the day the sun is hot, and if your thermometer is sheltered from the wind it may show 70° to 90°; but if you are out in the open, there is a cool breeze that fans your face. At night the thermometer will drop to 50° or 60° and woolen blankets are acceptable.

The cool breeze from the ocean, and the warm, caressing sunshine, are what give fertility, plus ~~so~~ Vegetation at night needs a rest, exactly as man does. In fact, man is brother to tree and flower. The source of life is one. And when we discover exactly what life is, we will find it a matter of electricity—at least that electric wizard, Doctor Charles P. Steinmetz, says so, and I am inclined to think he is right. ¶ The intermittent current gives us power, heat and light. The secret of the telephone is the broken current.

The secret of San Mateo County is the variation experienced every day in temperature. It is the cool breeze mated with the warm sunshine.

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**M**Y particular discovery of San Mateo County was an accident. I was being taken on a personally conducted tour by a professor and three students from Leland Stanford University.

Leland Stanford University is just across the line from San Mateo County. In order to get to "Leland Stanford" you have to traverse the little empire of San Mateo.

Here is a strip of land that runs up to a point touching the city of San Francisco, so that weary residents may take a run out from the busy,

bustling, hustling, ambitious city, out to the cool country where the fruits and the flowers invite, where the brook-trout lure, and the mountains beckon ☞ ☞

Practically, San Mateo County is one great park, laid out by Nature in a joyous mood.

Governor Leland Stanford, when he deeded the land to Leland Stanford University, described the tract as a part of "Menlo Park."

All of San Mateo County is a park, and must have appeared so to the Spaniards when they first came this way. ¶ The whole valley, say thirty miles across in places, seems to have been planted by some colossal super-Olmstead.

The live-oaks are placed at regular intervals, with big, wide, open spaces between. Now and again they are grouped according to the latest ideas ☞ Then, in the valleys toward the mountains, are Redwoods that lift their branches in defiance to the breeze ; giant Redwoods, one hundred to two hundred feet high. ¶ A deal of redwood timber has been cut off in San Mateo County ; but there still remains one of the most wonderful redwood forests that are to be seen in the world.

To pass through these deep, dark, somber woods where the light of the sun never falls ; following

along the perfect roadways that wind through the valleys, up and up across the mountains, is an experience never to be forgotten.

I know that wonderful district known as "The Trossachs" in Scotland, where tired citizens of London and Edinburgh come to view Nature; but nothing in The Trossachs equals the mountain-roads of San Mateo County as they wind in and out among the redwoods, where the hurrying, scurrying streams dash over the rocks hastening to the sea, and the road clings to the mountainside in places, overlooking valley and wooded hills, with glimpses of the great Pacific on one side and San Francisco Bay on the other, with the haze of the great city only twenty miles away.

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**I**T is an interesting fact in history that San Francisco Bay was not discovered by way of the Golden Gate. In fact, Sir Francis Drake sailed right up past the Golden Gate and never discovered this narrow inlet opening up into one of the most wonderful bays in the whole world. The Bay was discovered from the mountain-ridge, in what is now San Mateo County, by the Spaniards who came overland. You can stand on the spot where they stood and see the smiling, placid water

of San Francisco Bay stretching away for a distance of twenty miles or more. To find the outlet to the sea of this wonderful harbor was a secondary proposition 30 30

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**A**LONG the coast, snuggled between the Pacific Ocean and the mountain-range, is a narrow stretch of land devoted to market-gardens.

The principal town in this district is Half Moon, not because Henry Hudson sailed thither, but on account of the bay, which is crescent-shaped. The town of Half Moon looks like one of the wayside villages of Spain.

A half-hour's run in an auto and you reach the town of Pescadero, a hunter's paradise, and the gateway to the redwood forests.

Two things are grown here in a profusion not reached anywhere else in America—these things are Brussels Sprouts and Artichokes.

New York City looks to San Mateo County for its artichokes. One woman—a lone, unprotected widow—raised artichokes to the extent of seven hundred dollars on a single acre. And as she had more than twenty acres, just as productive, and owned three “Fords,” I did n’t waste any pity on her sad plight.

¶ Another woman I met raised and sold violets,

the past year, to the extent of three thousand dollars. And this woman has contracted to deliver to the Exposition an automobile-truck load of violets a day from February Twentieth to December First. And I did n't pity her either.

When I tramped through the Lake District in the North of England, I thought I had found the place where the Garden of Eden exists, if anywhere. Since then I have discovered that the ideal is in San Mateo County.

When the Franciscan Fathers founded their mission in San Francisco they claimed the district we call San Mateo County as their own. For let it not be forgotten that the Franciscan Friars, while men of deep spirituality, were at the same time possessed of farseeing economic insight into productive possibilities. Each of these wonderful missions, ranging from San Diego to San Francisco, every forty miles over a distance of six hundred miles, was adjacent to some beautiful, fertile valley through which ran a plenteous supply of water. The wealth of the missions came from their ability to apply water to land. Verily they made the desert to blossom like the rose, and under their skilful guidance the waste places were made green. San Mateo County has fertile soil and water with-

out limit. In fact, the water-supply of San Francisco comes from a beautiful chain of lakes that have been linked together by engineering skill. These lakes are the property of the Spring Valley Water Company, which has purchased several thousand acres on the mountainside so as to protect the water-supply from pollution.

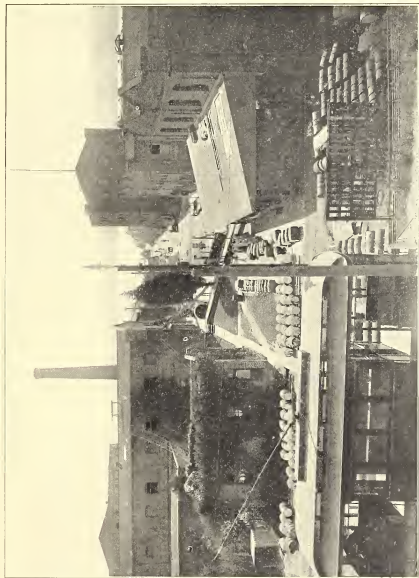
Winding along these lakes and through the preserves of the Spring Valley Water Company, one discovers a wealth of wild, natural, untamed beauty, unexpected in such close proximity to the great city.

Here we behold conditions practically as they were when the Franciscan Fathers first came here and founded the city of San Francisco, in the unforgettable year Seventeen Hundred Seventy-six.

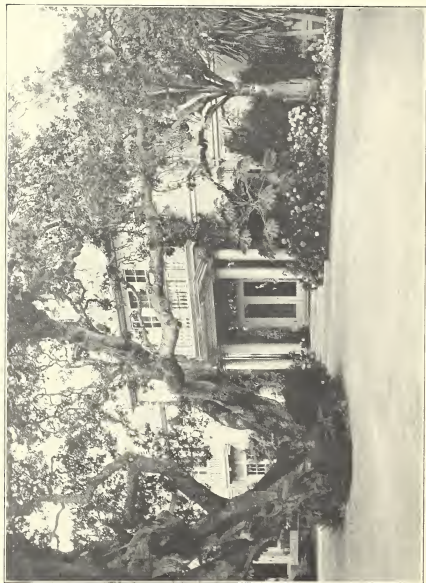
In the course of time the San Mateo tract—which is literally the “Saint Matthew Country”—passed into the hands of the Mexican Government, and we beheld the Age of the Barons, with political conditions worked out here exactly as they were in Europe during the Middle Ages. ¶ Medievalism came back in San Mateo County and manifested itself in the famous San Mateo, the Buri-Buri and the Pulgas Ranchos.

We see acres and acres of eucalyptus and acacia.

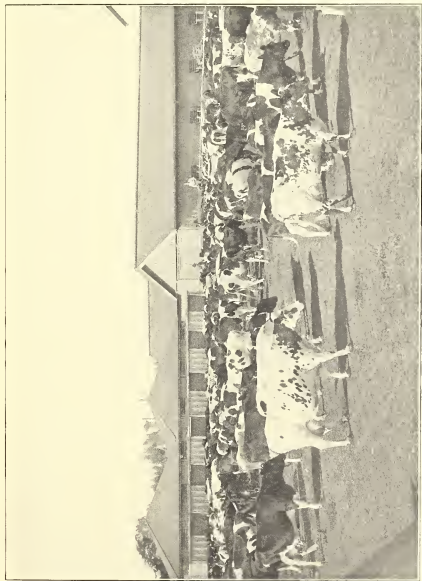




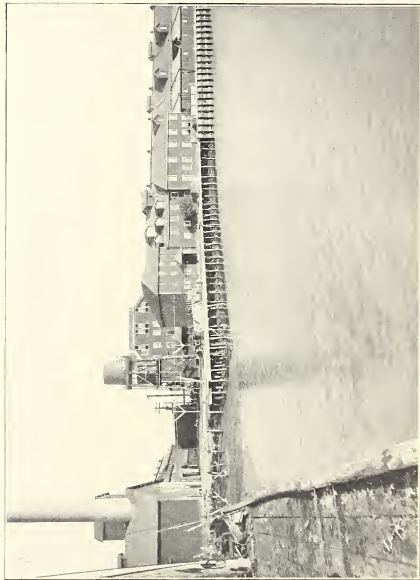
A FACTORY AT SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO



RESIDENCE OF A. EASTON, HILLSBOROUGH



DAIRY HERD—MILLBRAE



A FACTORY AT REDWOOD CITY

Then there are long lines of cedars of Lebanon that served to mark the entrance or lane to the mansion, giants in proportion, planted fifty or sixty years ago, that are now the possession of many a modest man who has built his bungalow under the protecting shade of trees planted by men who did better than they knew.

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**S**AN MATEO COUNTY has the best roads of any county in California, and this means the best roads in the United States. The State of California has recently appropriated the sum of eighteen million dollars for good roads, and much money has been already expended, and this without graft or grab. ¶ San Mateo County itself appropriated one million two hundred fifty thousand dollars for the express purpose of putting and keeping its highways in the best possible condition, and the result is that one can make the run by automobile from the center of San Francisco to Leland Stanford University in an hour. These roads are mostly concrete, covered with a coating of asphaltum. This asphaltum is put on hot, rolled while hot, hardens in a few hours, and thanks to the California climate makes a road. This material for roads in a country where there


are frosts, might be open to criticism, but here, where snow and frost exist only as unfounded rumors, the material is perfect.

In truth, any one who goes to the San Francisco-Panama Exposition who does not see San Mateo County, really has not seen California at all ☛


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**S**AN MATEO COUNTY represents six distinct stages of human evolution: first, the Indians; second, the Spanish explorers; third, the Missions; fourth, the great landed estates, known as the Ranchos; fifth, the Bonanza kings, with their great country seats; sixth, the stage of humanism, which is now present, when homes are to be had large or small, but always complete and satisfying, to suit every taste and every purse ☛ The prosperous men of San Francisco bought the ranches, in degree limited their size, brought a deal of art to bear, and took San Mateo County for their playground.

The Family Club of San Mateo County is a subsidiary of one of San Francisco's leading clubs. The desire for a little frolic, together with the eternal California penchant for expansion, caused this club to buy something like fifty acres of choice property at Woodside.

About half of the tract is taken up with as lovely a grove of Redwood trees as one ever laid glimmers on 

Paradoxically, the Family Club is not a family affair, as it is the iron-clad rule that no woman shall ever step foot inside the gate.

Once a year this club holds a "Family Row," in which much pent-up cosmic ginger is liberated . Carrying the paradox one step further, the "National Bird" of the Family Club is the stork. Let it go at that!

The Menlo Country Club has fifty acres of noble golf-grounds and a fine clubhouse. I hit up the grounds in a nine-hole match with a good Californian and unlimbered my vocabulary.

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**W**HEN you leave San Francisco for San Mateo County, there are two boulevards open. One takes you through Golden Gate Park, passing Ocean View, and joins the main highway at Colma. The other route is out Mission Street through Daly City.

A third boulevard is now in course of construction and will be in use when the great exposition opens. This boulevard will leave Market Street at Eleventh Street, running over the Potrero, along the

San Bruno Road, and joining the State Highway at "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

The boulevard out Golden Gate Park takes one through some very picturesque scenery, where there is greenery galore.

The route through Mission Street carries you through a continuous business section. ¶ The congestion of commerce grows less as you move on, and the traveler does not know when he has left San Francisco and entered San Mateo County.

If you leave San Francisco after the theater for San Mateo County you will meet long lines of wagons carrying supplies of fruit and vegetables to San Francisco. These wagon-lines may stretch out a mile. They move slowly, leisurely, and the driver's intent is to arrive in San Francisco by daylight.

¶ The third avenue out of San Francisco takes the traveler over estates once owned by the multimillionaires, but which now belong to home-lovers.

¶ You pass through Visitacion Valley, along the Bay Shore to South San Francisco.

Here Swift and Company have a flourishing branch of their Chicago plant.

The Bay at South San Francisco has a depth of from two to twelve feet at low tide. Over thirty manufacturing plants are found here, that main-



tain goodly payrolls, one being a paint manufactory, one a great repair-shop, then come steel-mills, a pottery-plant, etc.

The distance from the center of San Francisco to South San Francisco is nine miles. The commutation-ticket rate is three dollars a month, which is cheaper than to stay at home.

Good roads, and quick water and rail transportation make this an especially desirable business location. Deep-water facilities give South San Francisco terminal rates, and land here may be obtained very much cheaper than in San Francisco proper, and then the workman can secure a lot by paying down just about the amount of money that is in his pay-envelope one week.

He can build his own home and have a house which is his castle, with flowers, berries, fruit, vegetables, and the "high cost of living" becomes a pleasantry. And when a man has bought a home he has given bonds to society for good behavior. Following down the Peninsula along the Bay Shore you will come to San Bruno. Here are water and rail facilities. And you will find the same at San Mateo, at Belmont and San Carlos. Opportunity is here writ in Capitals!

The next place is Redwood City. In a lavish mood

Nature sent a great stretching arm of the Bay inland three miles, and on this arm is built the flourishing, growing and evolving Redwood City. This arm of the Bay is called Redwood Creek. The fact is, however, it is no "creek." It has a depth of water at low tide of about twenty feet and at high tide the depth is fully thirty feet. At the head of this "Creek" was once a noble forest of Redwoods. These trees were cut, sawed up into lumber, and what was not used to build Redwood City was sent by deep water to market. ¶ Redwood City enjoys terminal freight-rates, and very low commutation and freight rates to San Francisco. Ships ply between Redwood City and Sacramento and San Joaquin River points so Redwood has a dozen manufacturing establishments. It is the county seat of San Mateo County. To the home-seeker Redwood City offers many inducements. The Summer nights are always cool, and in Winter very seldom indeed does the mercury hit the freezing-point. Then the neighbors are agreeable! so so

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**A**S before stated, Daly City is practically a part of the city of San Francisco. Going on through Daly City you come to Colma,

an old settlement containing many happy homes.

¶ Next is San Bruno, younger in years, but a little metropolis in itself.

Your automobile then reaches Lomita Park, where you will see men building bungalows and women tending the flowers, and red-cheeked children trooping to school.

Next is Millbrae, a place seemingly sacred to the lucky commuters.

Easton is younger, but beautifully situated and growing fast.

We next reach Burlingame, which the genus commuter has made his very own. "Thrift, Horatio, thrift," is on every side. The streets are perfectly paved. Everything is new, modern, spick-span—flowers, lawns, trellises, porticos, portolas, snug little individual garages. The whole place has an atmosphere of success, but success without frills and flummery.

San Mateo is the largest town on the Peninsula. It is the terminal of the United Railroads, an interurban line that is a credit to everybody concerned ☞ ☞

Just to the west of San Mateo is Hillsborough—classic Hillsborough. It is a strictly residential city all by itself. It is a series of individual little

mountains covered with great green oaks, and in this natural forest the houses are snuggled midst a wealth of greenery.

Time and the talent of man have made of Hillsborough a city such as you will see clinging to the hillsides occasionally in Southern Italy. I know of nothing quite like it in America. If you wanted to select a modern Garden of Eden you could not do better than to come here.

Just beyond the city limits of San Mateo is Leslie, a station established for the convenience of the people in this vicinity.

Next is Beresford ; then comes Belmont, both with bungalows beautiful as a poet's dream.

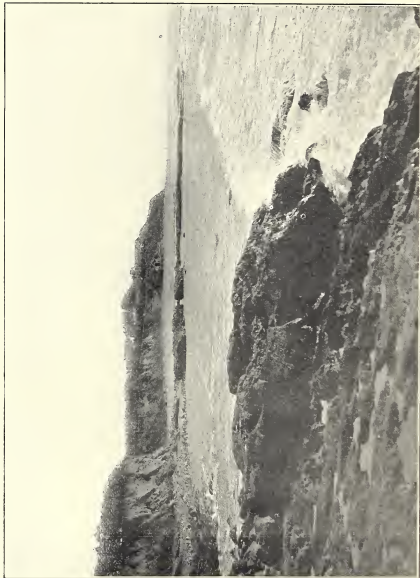
The early millionaires of California did credit to their good taste when they located in this vicinity.

¶ San Carlos offers every opportunity for the home-seeker who wants a little paradise where he can shut the world out.

Atherton takes care of the commuters just to the south of Redwood City, and then comes Menlo Park, which supplied its name to a certain historic town in New Jersey—Menlo Park, the park laid out and cared for by Nature in one of her bounteous moods. Oak-dotted, with every condition of climate and soil, it is no wonder that the early



RESIDENCE OF GEO. A. POPE, HILLSBOROUGH



MOSS BEACH ON OCEAN SHORE RAILROAD

San Franciscans appropriated it as their own. Woodside lies six miles to the west of Menlo Park and about the same distance from Redwood City. It is devoted to beautiful homes, big estates, where everything that wealth and good taste can procure abounds.

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I WAS immensely interested in the sand beaches along the Pacific in San Mateo County—Salada Beach, Calera, Tobin, Montara, Farrallone, Moss Beach, Marine View, Princeton, Granada, Half-Moon Bay, Tunitas Glen, San Gregorio, Pescadero, Pebble Beach.

Bathing, fishing, hunting—every good thing here abounds. These beaches are practically new discoveries for the average citizen of California. When the Ocean Shore Railroad was built, it opened up these delightful spots and gave them as a heritage to the people, and now the new system of highways has helped add to the popularity of these delightful play-places.

Practically, San Mateo County can be divided into four separate zones. One might be called the industrial and cottage zone.

The next would be the country of elegant estates, which we might call the aristocratic zone.

The next we would call the forest and stream zone.

¶ The next zone would be that of the ocean beaches, and this would include the marvelously fertile valleys where the artichokes and violets and sweet peas evolve from the soil in such vast and varied profusion.

San Mateo County has every natural industrial advantage. It has beautiful sites for homes. It has vast stretches of noble forests with open spaces where the millionaire can build to his heart's delight. Then there is the wild tangle of natural forest where untamed Nature plays hide and seek.

¶ The man who can not be accommodated in a satisfactory way in San Mateo County can not be accommodated anywhere on earth—manufacturer, artisan, millionaire, lover of Nature, and a modern agriculturist, as well as the artist and student, each and all can find in San Mateo County his heart's delight.

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**S**AN MATEO COUNTY is one big federated out-of-door club. Here we find golf, polo, tennis—galore. At Burlingame there are baseball clubs that threaten the proud prestige of the Athletics and the Cubs—that is, if you listen to the tales told on the veranda.



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I visited the Burlingame Country Club and the San Mateo Polo Club, and although I did not play polo the management gave me the use of a polo pony, and I went through a few of the motions for the lascivious pleatings of a motion-picture man. At the Beresford Country Club there is golf and tennis, and all that leisure and luxury can imagine.

Horses play a big part in the lives of the people of San Mateo. Perhaps it is the precedent of the ranchos and the Spanish cavaliers. Everybody rides.

There is not in the United States, as far as I know, any other county where there are three polo clubs.


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**N**ATURE has been wondrous kind to San Mateo County. The sea, the sky, the mountains, the live-oaks, the bay, all combine and invite man to "forget it." And here man has done, and is doing, his share to make the waste places green.

I have already spoken of the superb roads and beautiful homes.

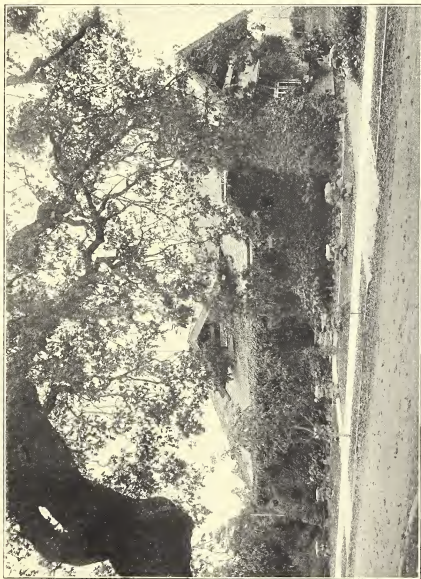
But beyond the tangible, there is an intangible something which I discovered everywhere present in San Mateo County, that is, the human quality, the instinct of courtesy, of kindness, of goodwill,

of mutual helpfulness. How any one could live in San Mateo County and be lonely and homesick I do not know.

San Mateo County is easily reached by the Southern Pacific Railroad, by the Ocean Shore Railroad, by electric lines, and now I understand that there is a line of automobiles that carries visitors direct from the great Panama Exposition to the different towns and cities in San Mateo County. Happy San Mateo County! Happy the people who live here! Fortunate indeed are the visitors who do not omit San Mateo from their itinerary! 

Here you wade knee deep in history. Relics of the Indian time still abound. You see the sights looked upon by the eyes of the Spanish Explorers  Then you see the footprints of the Rancheros, and visit the great mansions where came the Bonanza Kings to rest and play.

And now you behold a better day, when the beauties of San Mateo are given up to the people, to all of the people, as a playground and a place of study, of rest, of recreation—you see the San Mateo of Beautiful Homes, of Smiling Gardens, of fruits and flowers, of schools and playgrounds.



A BUNGALOW—REDWOOD CITY













